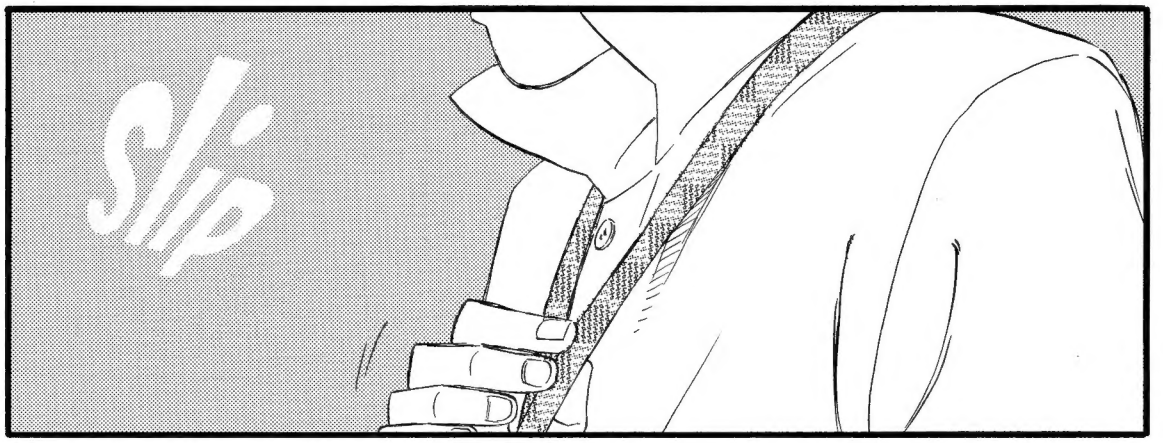
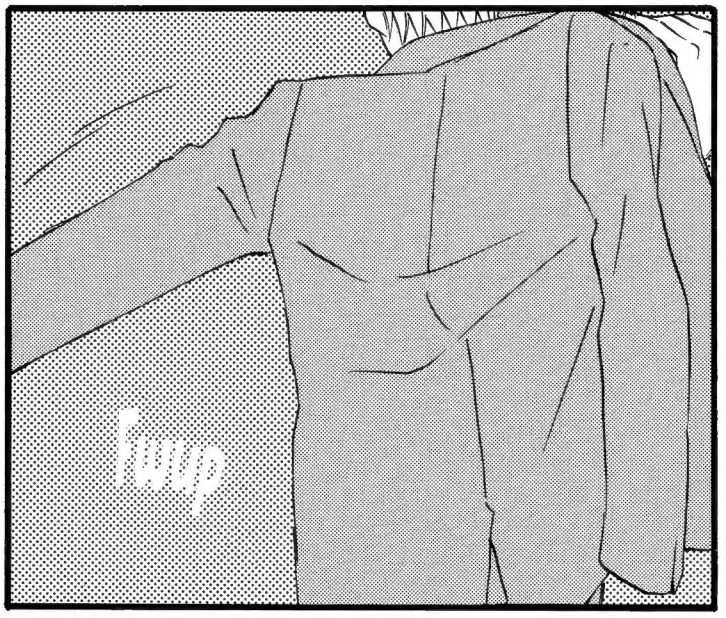
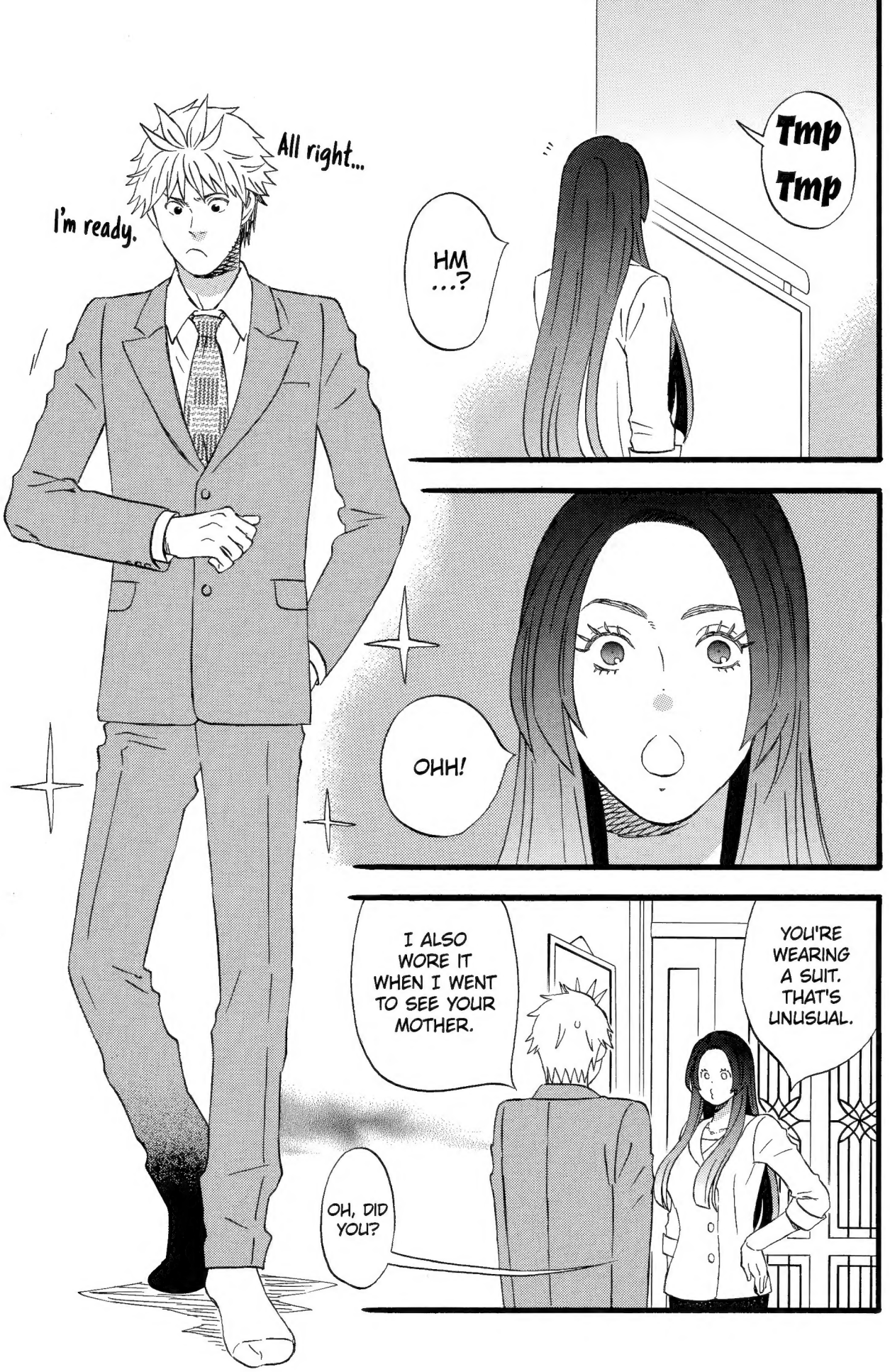
Chapter 13: Ishimura-san's Affection

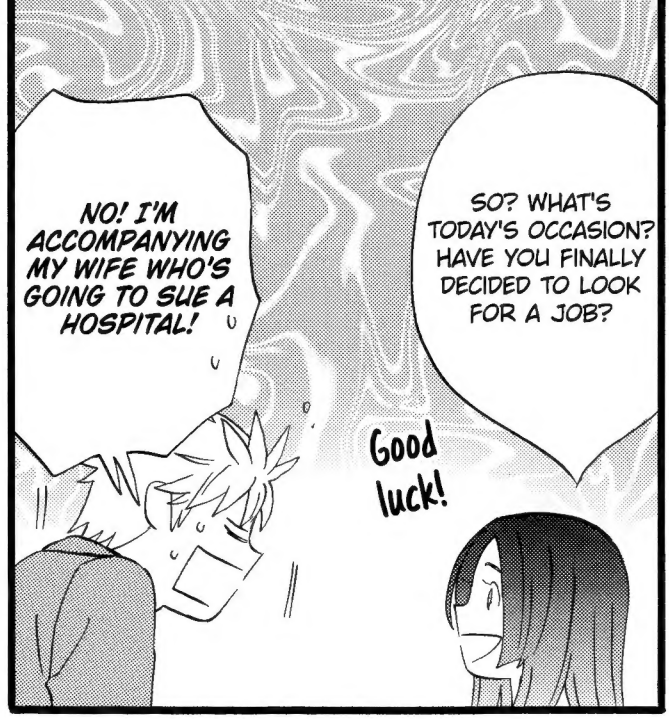

Slip

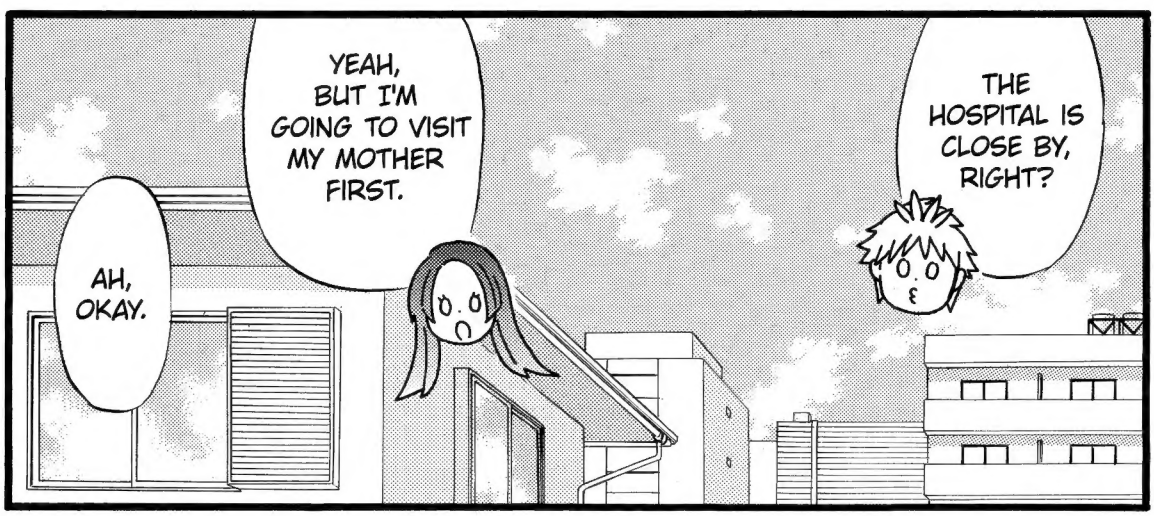

Fwup

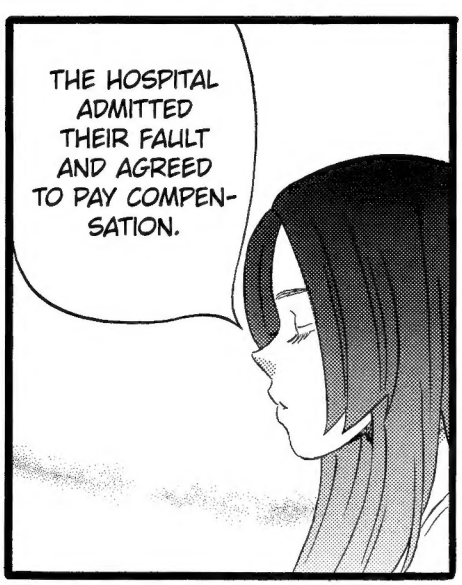
Squeeze

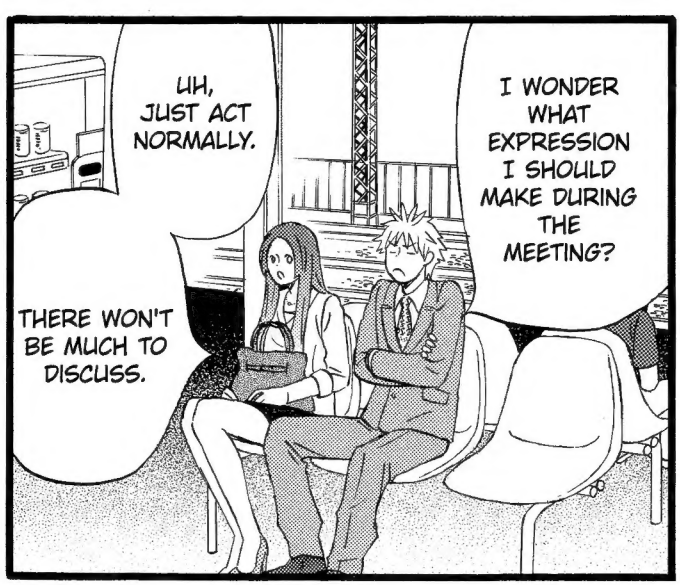

All right...
I'm ready.
Tmp
Tmp
HM ...?
OHH!
I ALSO WORE IT WHEN I WENT TO SEE YOUR MOTHER.
YOU'RE WEARING A SUIT. THAT'S UNUSUAL.
OH, DID YOU?

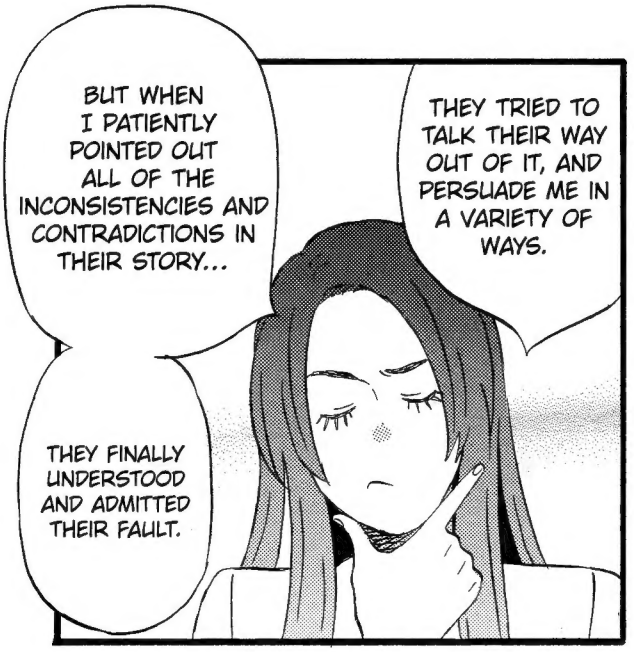
GEEZ! I TOLD YOU THAT I'M GOING WITH YOU!
YOU'D BE BETTER OFF GOING TO THE EMPLOYMENT CENTER DRESSED LIKE THAT.

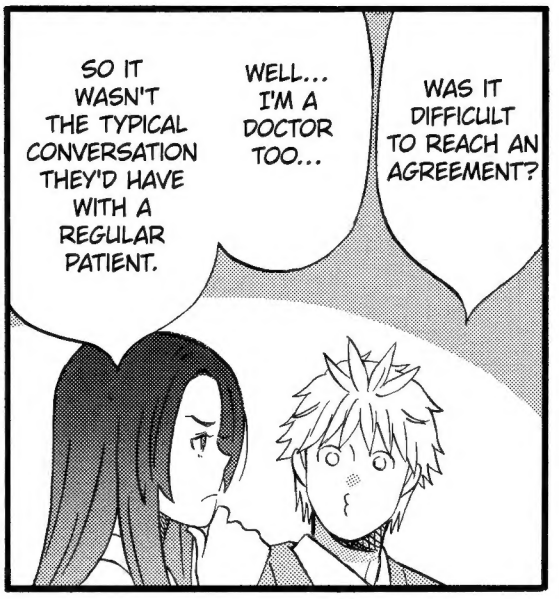

NO! I'M ACCOMPANYING MY WIFE WHO'S GOING TO SUE A HOSPITAL!
SO? WHAT'S TODAY'S OCCASION? HAVE YOU FINALLY DECIDED TO LOOK FOR A JOB?
Good luck!


YEAH, BUT I'M GOING TO VISIT MY MOTHER FIRST.
THE HOSPITAL IS CLOSE BY, RIGHT?
AH, OKAY.

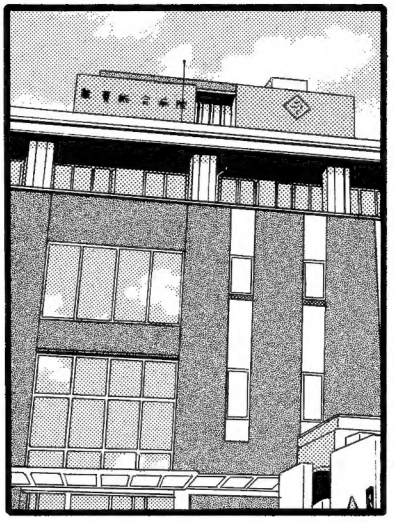

THE HOSPITAL ADMITTED THEIR FAULT AND AGREED TO PAY COMPEN-SATION.

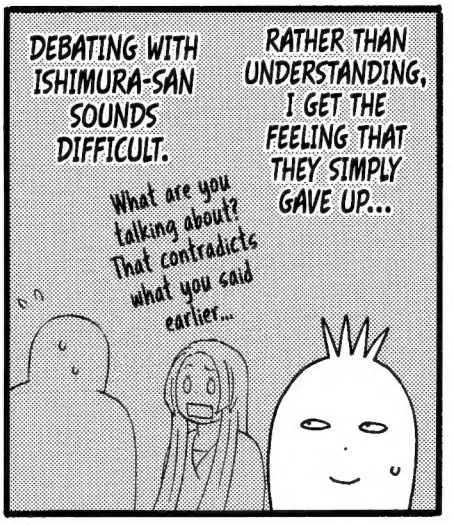

UH, JUST ACT NORMALLY.
I WONDER WHAT EXPRESSION I SHOULD MAKE DURING THE MEETING?
THERE WON'T BE MUCH TO DISCUSS.

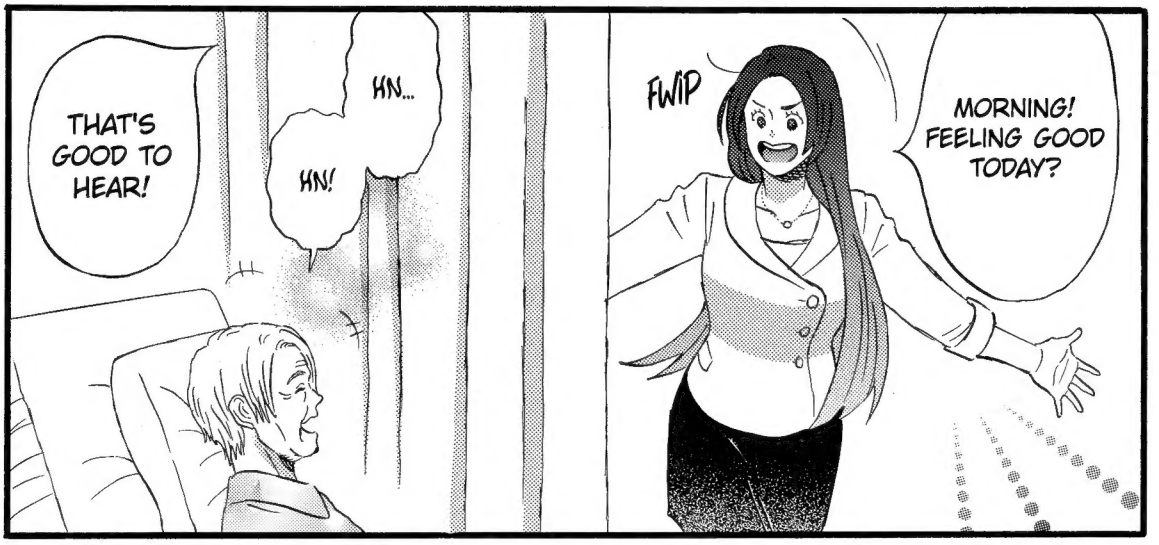

BUT WHEN I PATIENTLY POINTED OUT ALL OF THE INCONSISTENCIES AND CONTRADICTIONS IN THEIR STORY...
THEY TRIED TO TALK THEIR WAY OUT OF IT, AND PERSUADE ME IN A VARIETY OF WAYS.
THEY FINALLY UNDERSTOOD AND ADMITTED THEIR FAULT.


SO IT WASN'T THE TYPICAL CONVERSATION THEY'D HAVE WITH A REGULAR PATIENT.
WELL... I'M A DOCTOR TOO...
WAS IT DIFFICULT TO REACH AN AGREEMENT?

Knock Knock
MOTHER, I'M COMING IN.

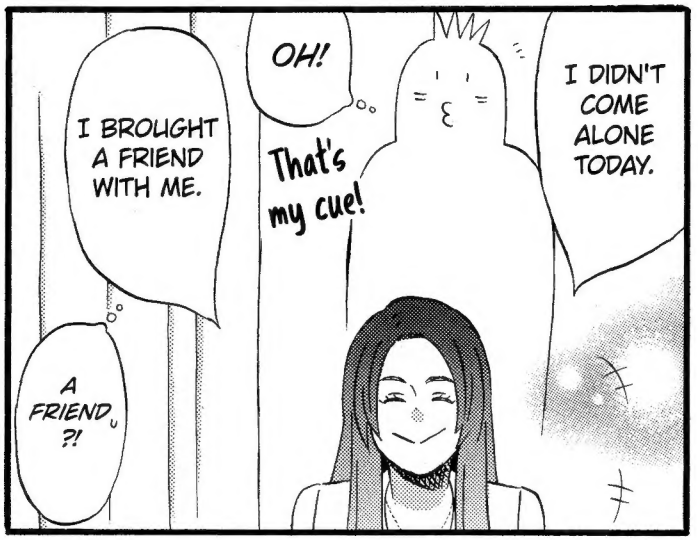


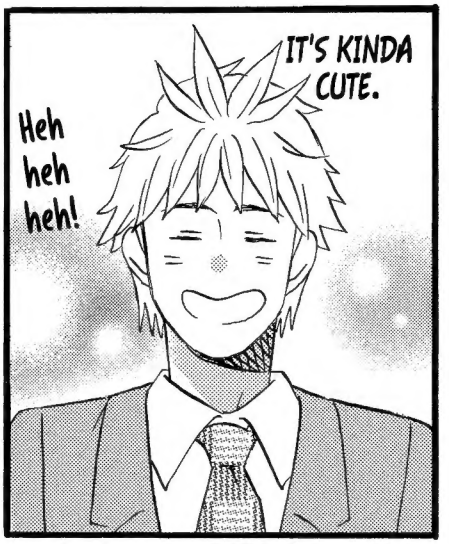

DEBATING WITH ISHIMURA-SAN SOUNDS DIFFICULT.
RATHER THAN UNDERSTANDING, I GET THE FEELING THAT THEY SIMPLY GAVE UP...
What are you talking about? That contradicts what you said earlier...

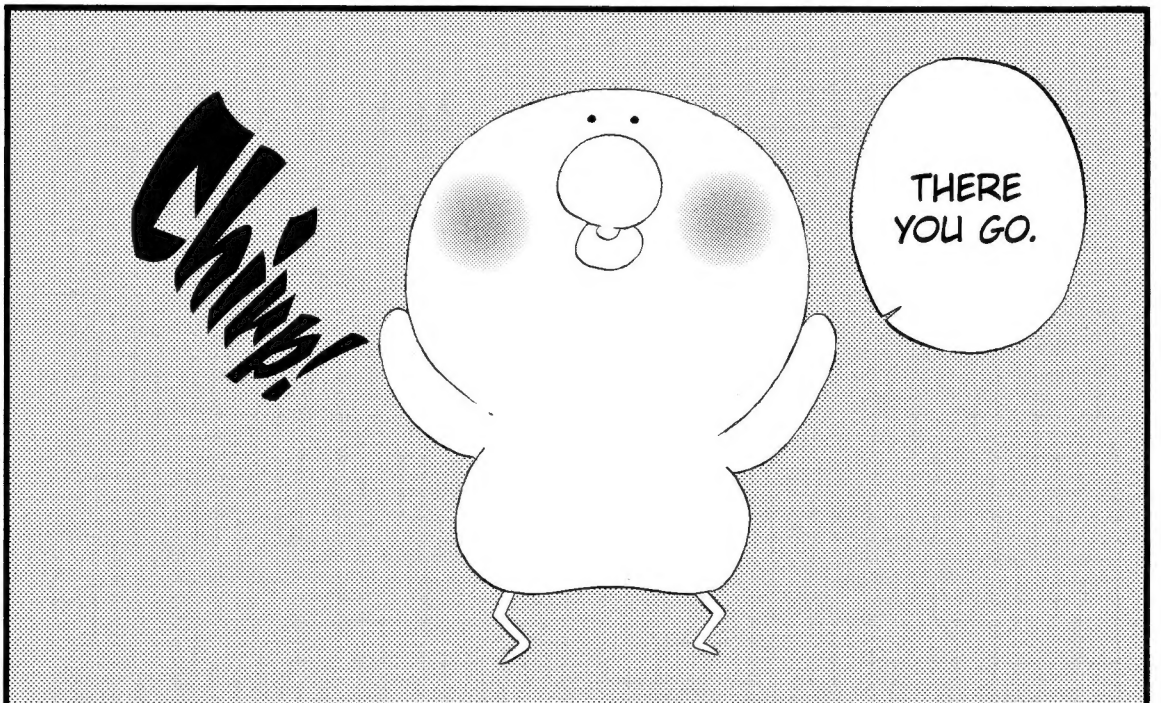

THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR!
HN...
HN!
FWIP
MORNING! FEELING GOOD TODAY?

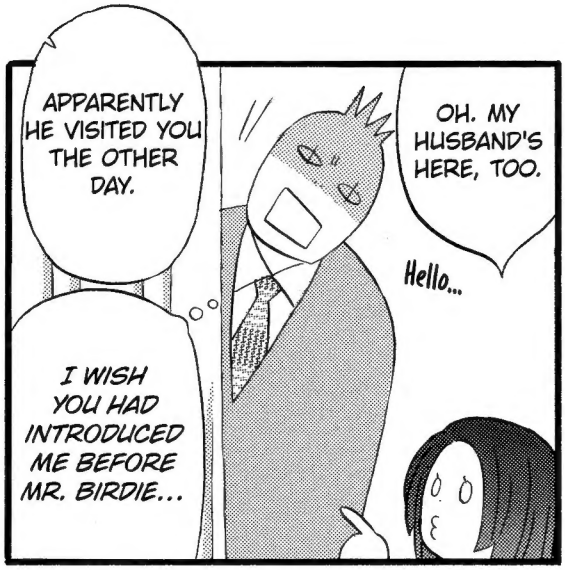
IN FRONT OF HER MOTHER, ISHIMURA-SAN SORT OF BEHAVES A BIT MORE CHILDISH.

...OH?

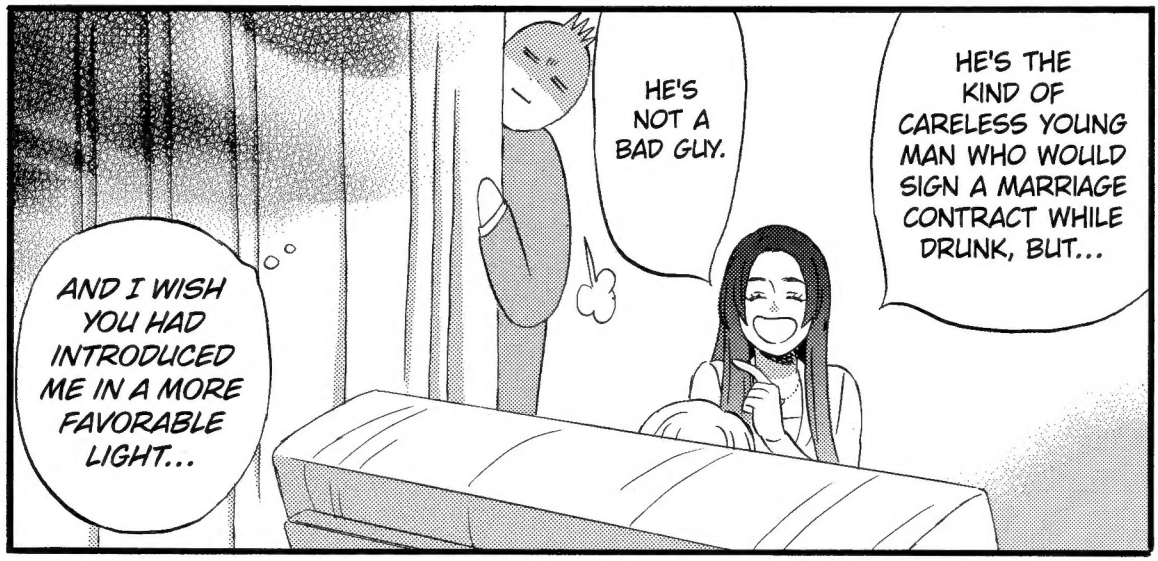

I BROUGHT A FRIEND WITH ME.
OH!
That's my cue!
I DIDN'T COME ALONE TODAY.
A FRIEND ?!

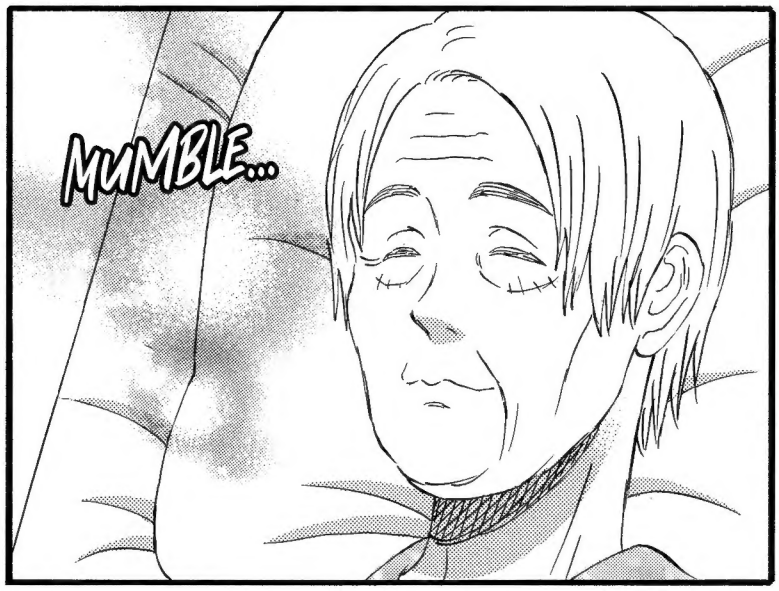

IT'S KINDA CUTE.
Heh heh heh!

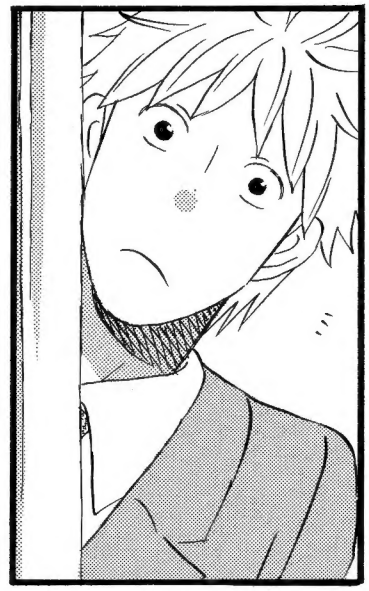

THERE YOU GO.
CHIMP!

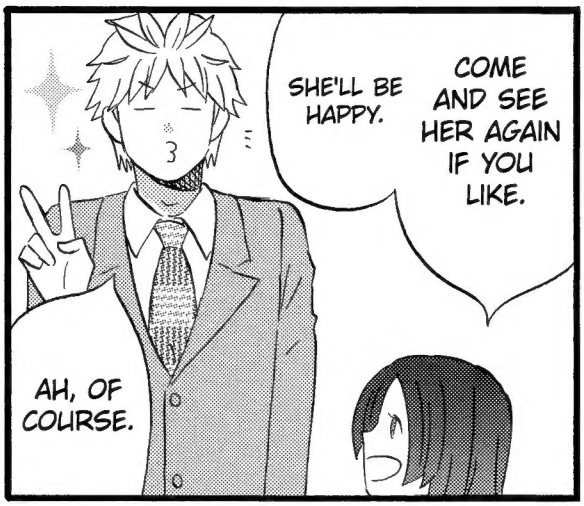

APPARENTLY HE VISITED YOU THE OTHER DAY.
OH. MY HUSBAND'S HERE, TOO.
Hello...
I WISH YOU HAD INTRODUCED ME BEFORE MR. BIRDIE...

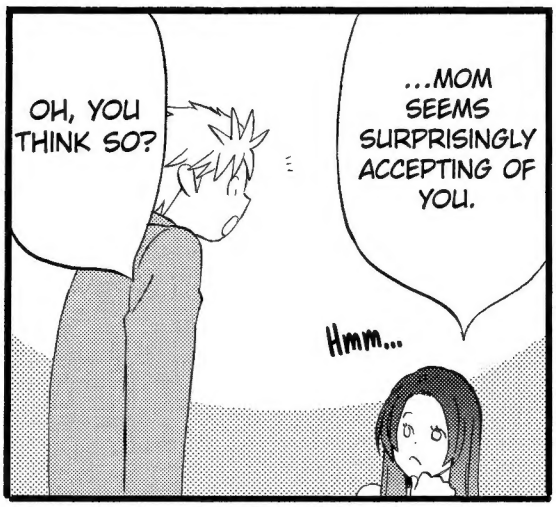
LET'S HOPE THEY GET ALONG WELL!
I MADE A FRIEND FOR THIS LITTLE GUY.
Mr. Birdie has a friend now!
...

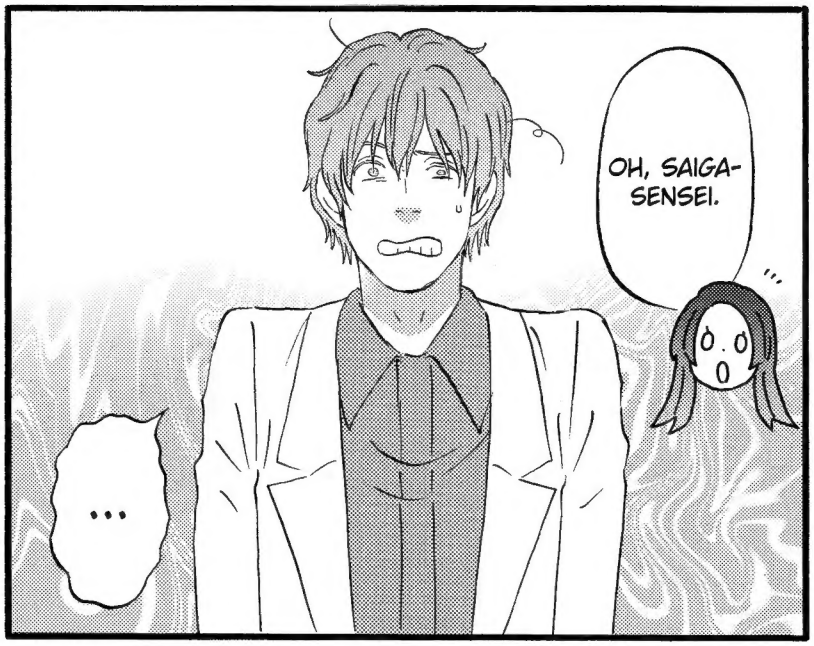

HE'S NOT A BAD GUY.
HE'S THE KIND OF CARELESS YOUNG MAN WHO WOULD SIGN A MARRIAGE CONTRACT WHILE DRUNK, BUT...
AND I WISH YOU HAD INTRODUCED ME IN A MORE FAVORABLE LIGHT...


MUMBLE...

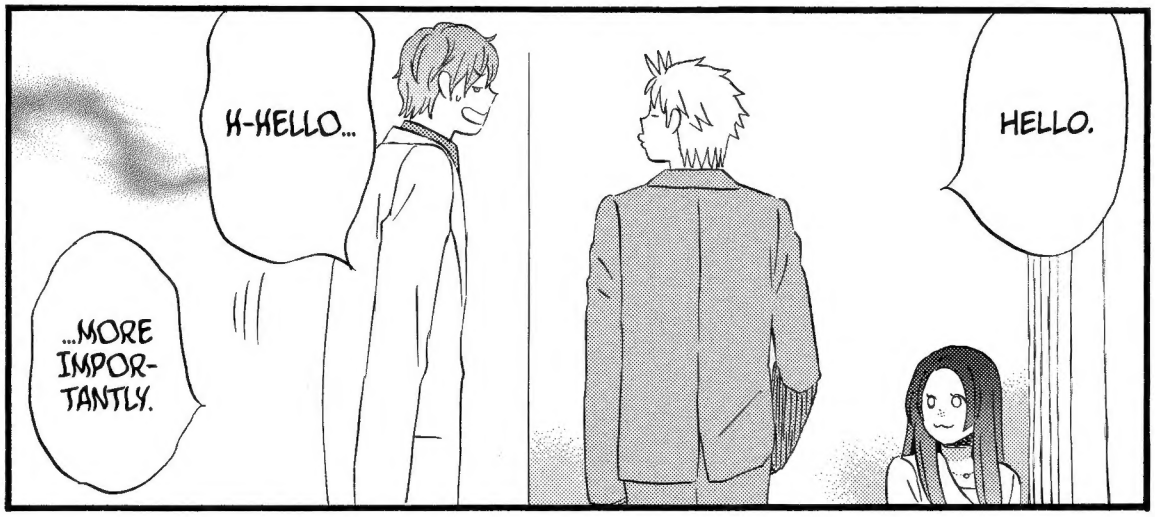



SHE'LL BE HAPPY.
COME AND SEE HER AGAIN IF YOU LIKE.
AH, OF COURSE.


OH, YOU THINK SO?
...MOM SEEMS SURPRISINGLY ACCEPTING OF YOU.
Hmm...

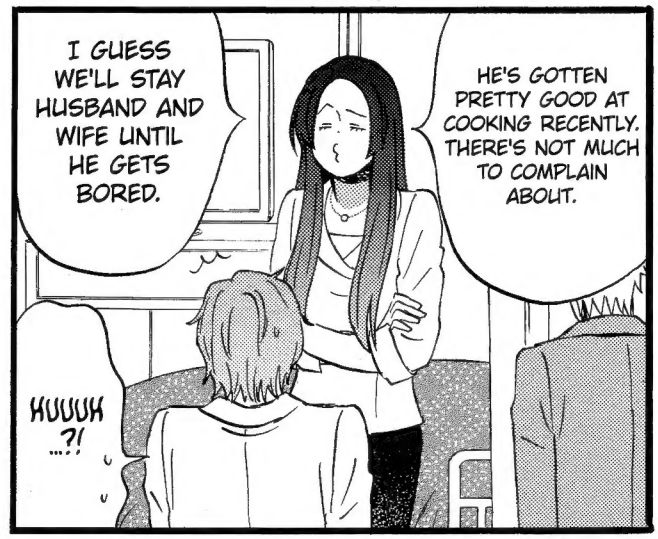

OH, SAIGA-SENSEI.
...

...HUH?!
HM?


H-HELLO...
...MORE IMPOR-TANTLY.
HELLO.

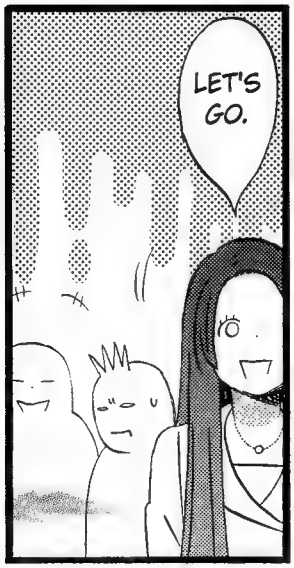
...
This guy.
That's me. I'm "this guy."
OHH, YEAH... THAT WAS MY INTENTION, BUT HE WON'T LEAVE ME. NOT MUCH I CAN DO.
He's already visited your mother twice...
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO SPLIT UP?
Clatter

...
Nghh...

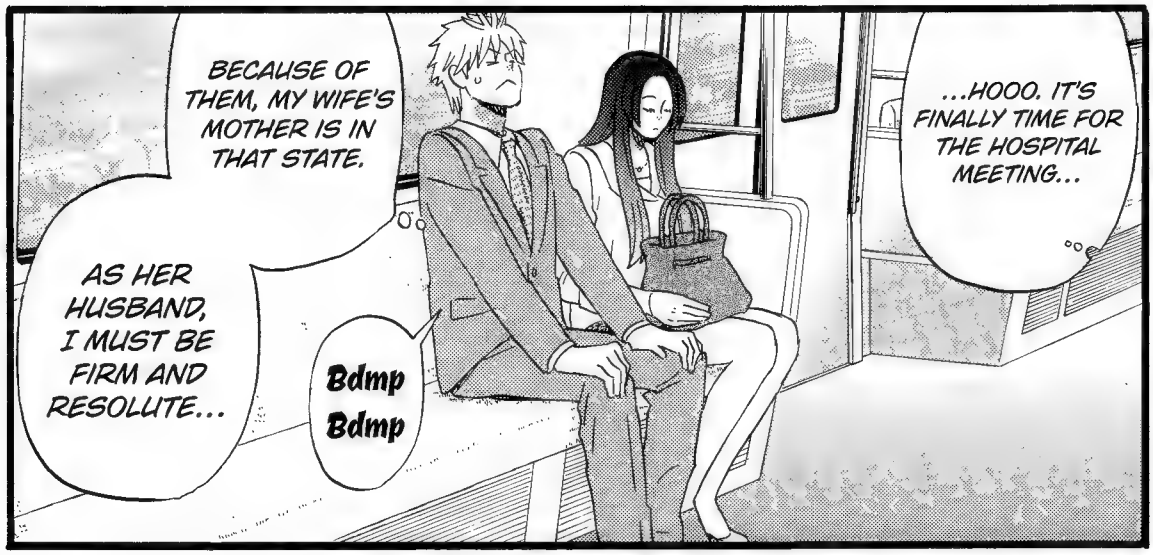

I GUESS WE'LL STAY HUSBAND AND WIFE UNTIL HE GETS BORED.
HE'S GOTTEN PRETTY GOOD AT COOKING RECENTLY. THERE'S NOT MUCH TO COMPLAIN ABOUT.
HUUUUH ...?!

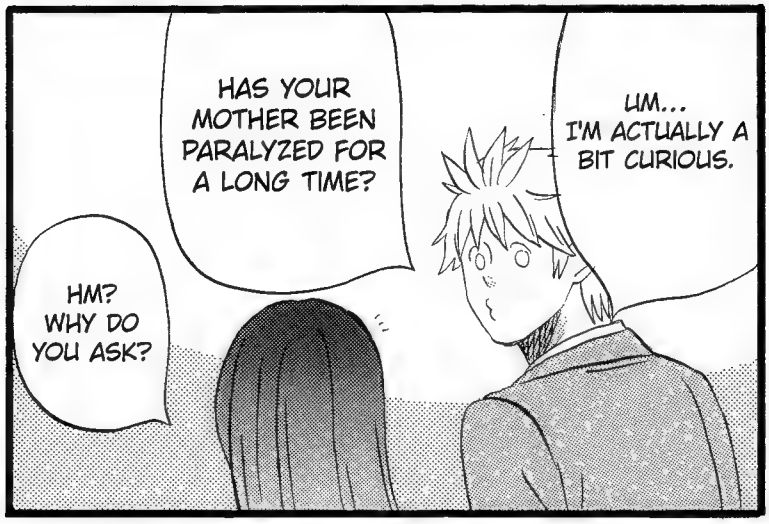
The loser.
UH, SURE...
W-WE SHOULD GET GOING, AI.
WE SHOULD, BUT...
The winner.

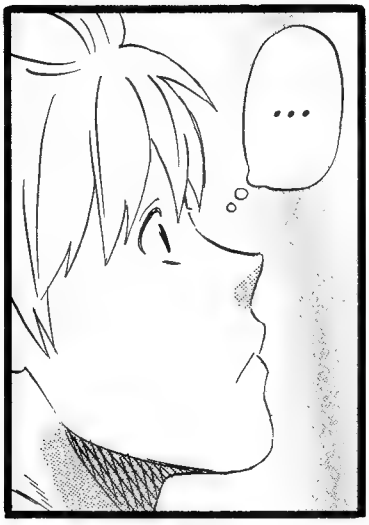
SWP


LET'S GO.

O-OKAY.
Push
DON'T CLING TO ME. IT MAKES IT HARD TO WALK...
SORRY.

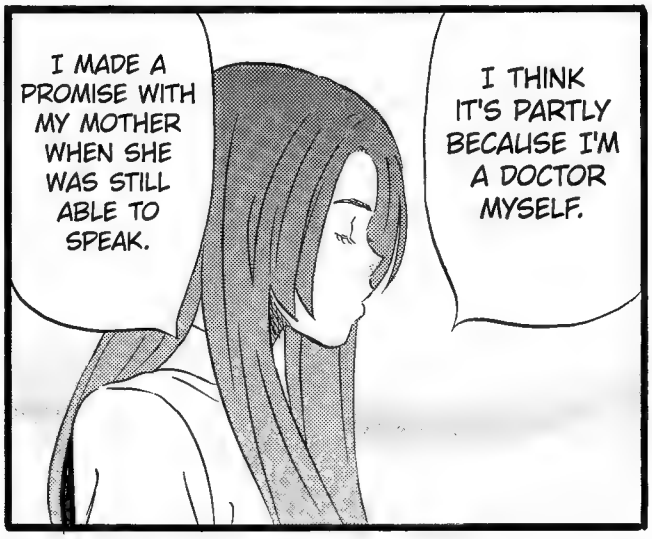

BECAUSE OF THEM, MY WIFE'S MOTHER IS IN THAT STATE.
AS HER HUSBAND, I MUST BE FIRM AND RESOLUTE...
Bdmp Bdmp
...HOOO. IT'S FINALLY TIME FOR THE HOSPITAL MEETING...


HAS YOUR MOTHER BEEN PARALYZED FOR A LONG TIME?
UM... I'M ACTUALLY A BIT CURIOUS.
HM? WHY DO YOU ASK?

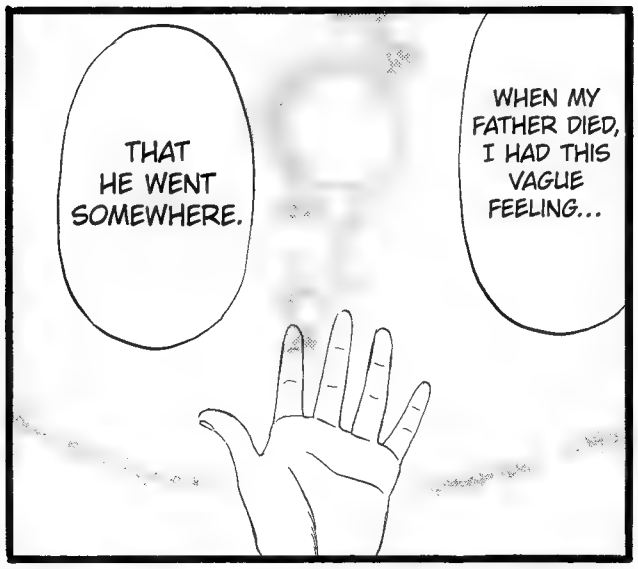

...

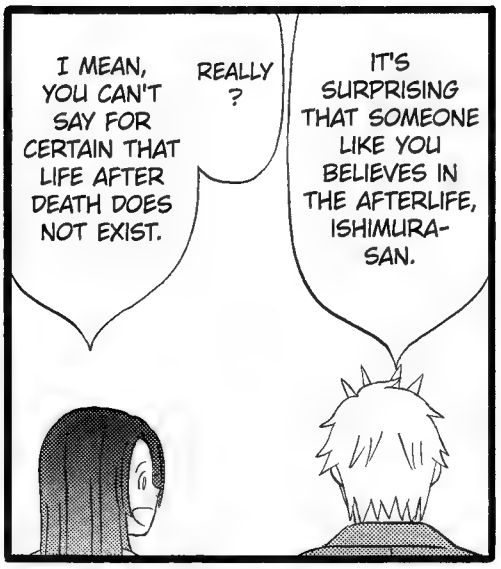
HMM...
SINCE I ASSUMED THAT'S WHAT IT'S USUALLY LIKE, IT'S A BIT SURPRISING.
...I FEEL THAT MOST FAMILIES IN THIS SITUATION WOULD BE MORE DEPRESSED OR TIRED.
WELL... IT'S A DIFFICULT SITUATION, BUT BOTH YOU AND YOUR MOTHER SEEM USED TO IT.

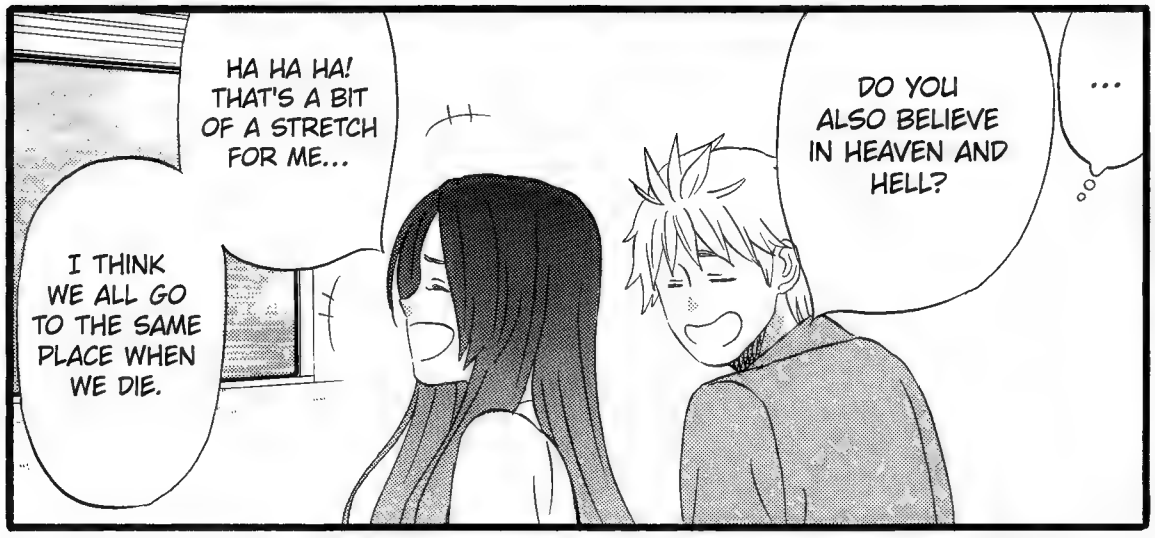
OHH...
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, I'LL BE THERE FOR HER UNTIL THE END, SO SHE MUST KEEP LIVING.


I MADE A PROMISE WITH MY MOTHER WHEN SHE WAS STILL ABLE TO SPEAK.
I THINK IT'S PARTLY BECAUSE I'M A DOCTOR MYSELF.

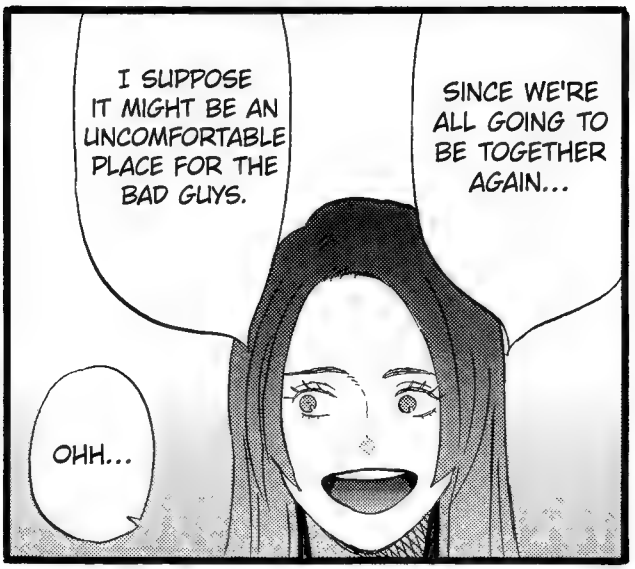
BESIDES... I'LL DIE ONE DAY, TOO.
WE BOTH BELIEVE WE'LL SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN ON THE OTHER SIDE.

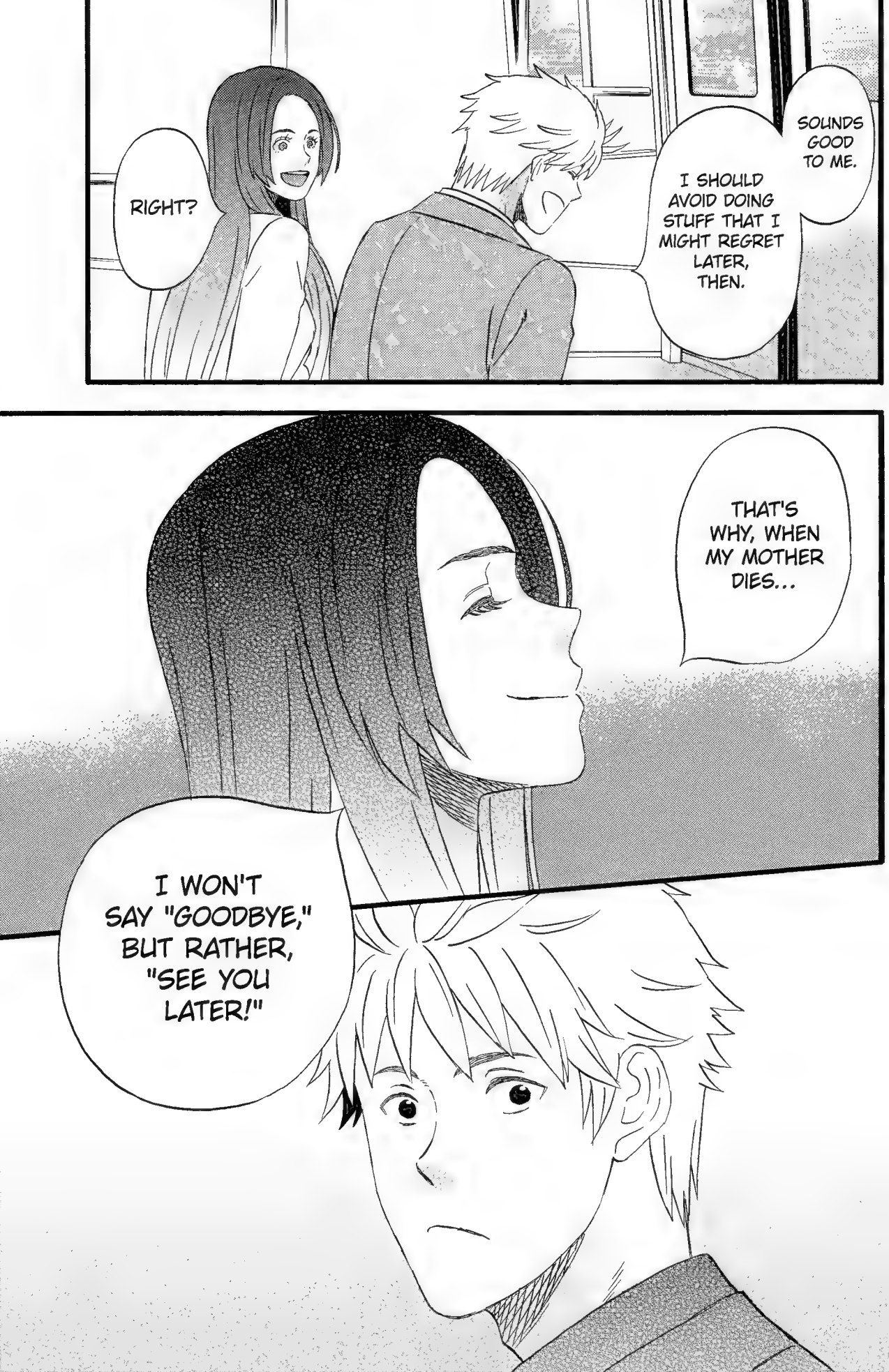

WHEN MY FATHER DIED, I HAD THIS VAGUE FEELING...
THAT HE WENT SOMEWHERE.

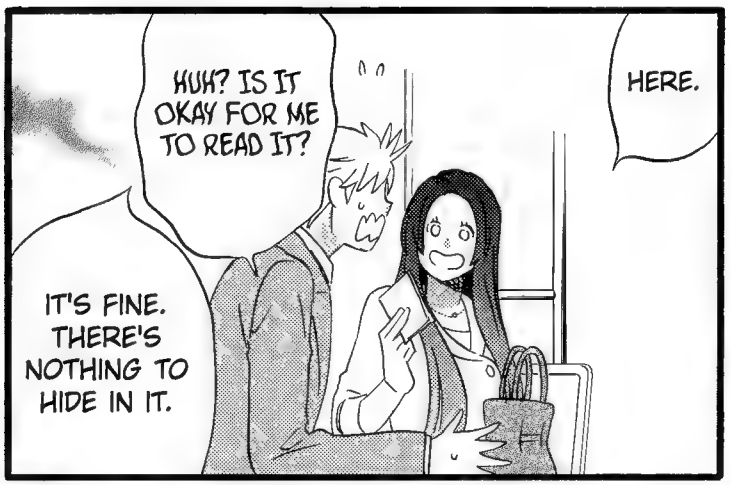

IT'S SURPRISING THAT SOMEONE LIKE YOU BELIEVES IN THE AFTERLIFE, ISHIMURA-SAN.
REALLY ?
I MEAN, YOU CAN'T SAY FOR CERTAIN THAT LIFE AFTER DEATH DOES NOT EXIST.

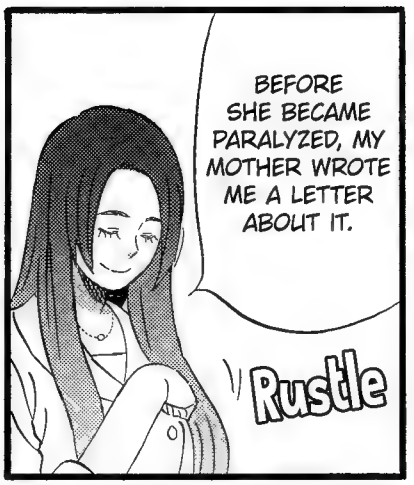

...
DO YOU ALSO BELIEVE IN HEAVEN AND HELL?
HA HA HA! THAT'S A BIT OF A STRETCH FOR ME...
I THINK WE ALL GO TO THE SAME PLACE WHEN WE DIE.

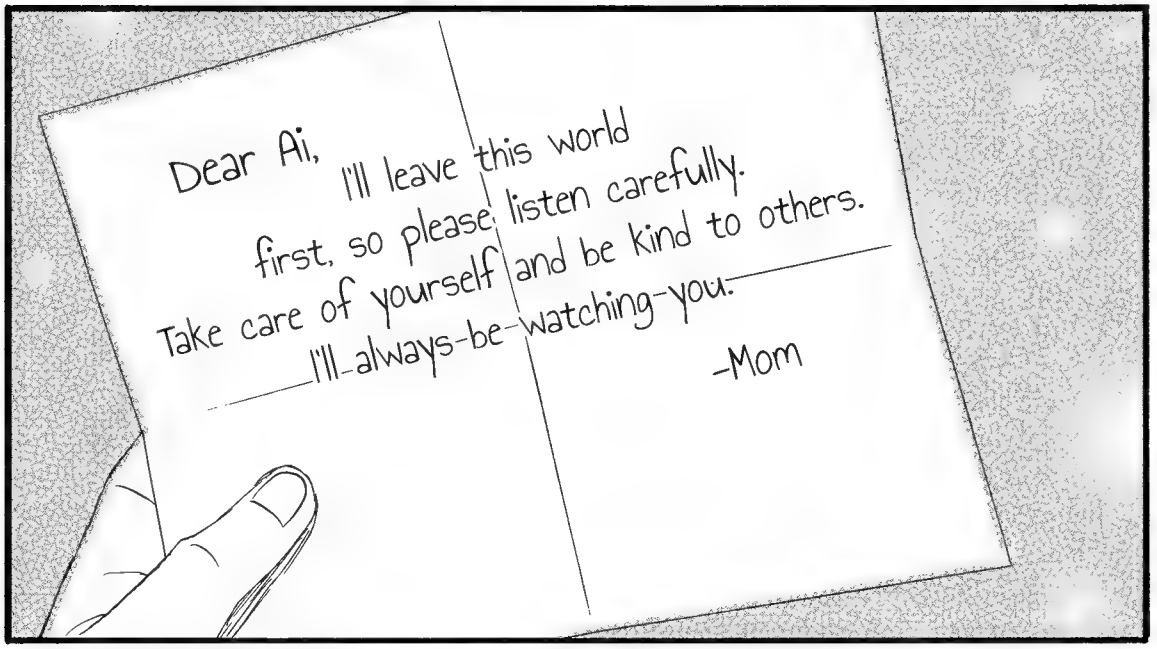
IT'S THE SAME PLACE, BUT DEPENDING ON THE PERSON, IT COULD STILL BE HEAVEN OR HELL FOR THEM.
YEP.
I see...

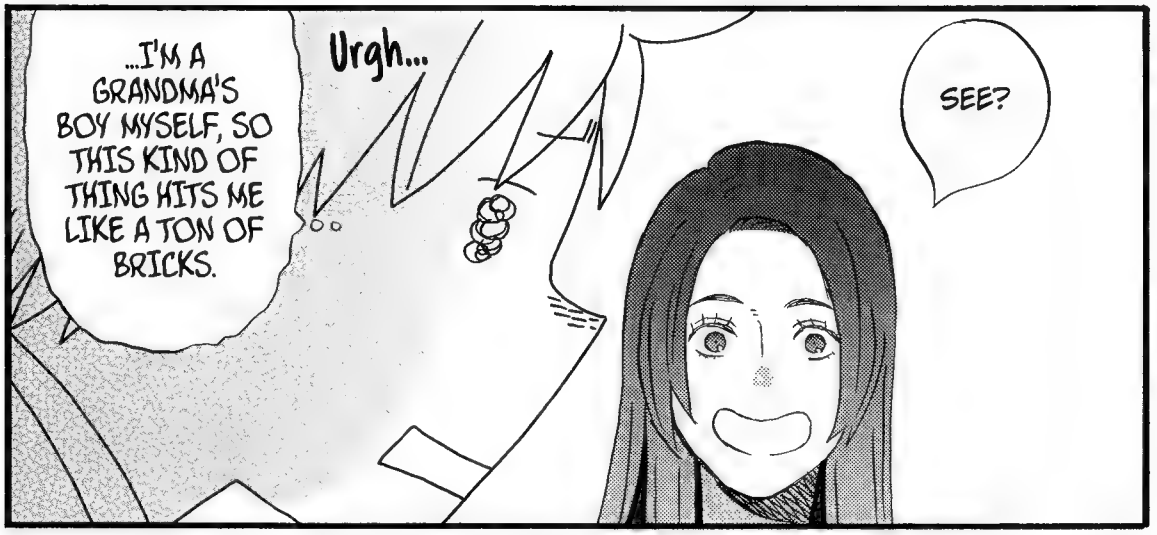

SINCE WE'RE ALL GOING TO BE TOGETHER AGAIN...
I SUPPOSE IT MIGHT BE AN UNCOMFORTABLE PLACE FOR THE BAD GUYS.
OHH...


RIGHT?
I SHOULD AVOID DOING STUFF THAT I MIGHT REGRET LATER, THEN.
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.
THAT'S WHY, WHEN MY MOTHER DIES...
I WON'T SAY "GOODBYE," BUT RATHER, "SEE YOU LATER!"


HUH? IS IT OKAY FOR ME TO READ IT?
HERE.
IT'S FINE. THERE'S NOTHING TO HIDE IN IT.

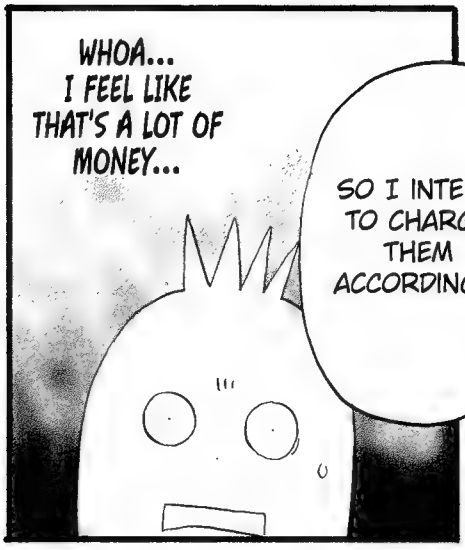

BEFORE SHE BECAME PARALYZED, MY MOTHER WROTE ME A LETTER ABOUT IT.
Rustle

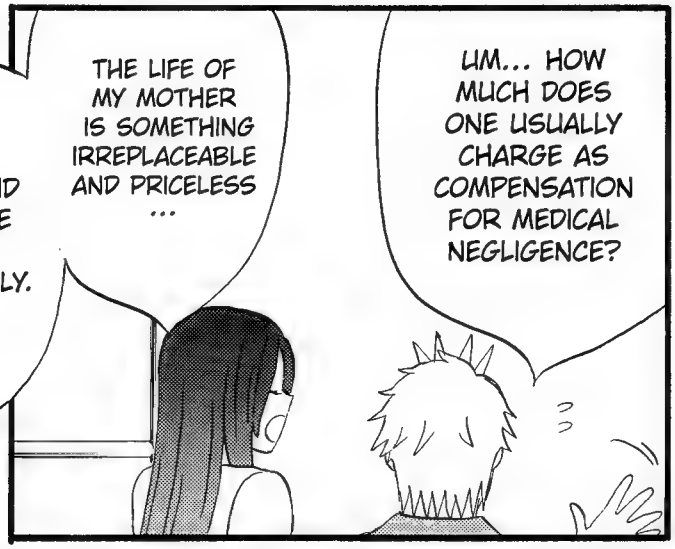

Dear Ai,
I'll leave this world first, so please listen carefully.
Take care of yourself and be kind to others.
I'll always be watching you.
-Mom


...I'M A GRANDMA'S BOY MYSELF, SO THIS KIND OF THING HITS ME LIKE A TON OF BRICKS.
Urgh...
SEE?

...
I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEY ARE TO BLAME, SO I'M DEMANDING COMPENSATION.

THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT'S WHY I'M DETERMINED TO HOLD THE HOSPITAL ACCOUNTABLE FOR WHAT THEY'VE DONE TO HER.
Waah...
YOUR FAMILY IS REALLY PRECIOUS TO YOU, ISN'T IT?
Why're you crying?

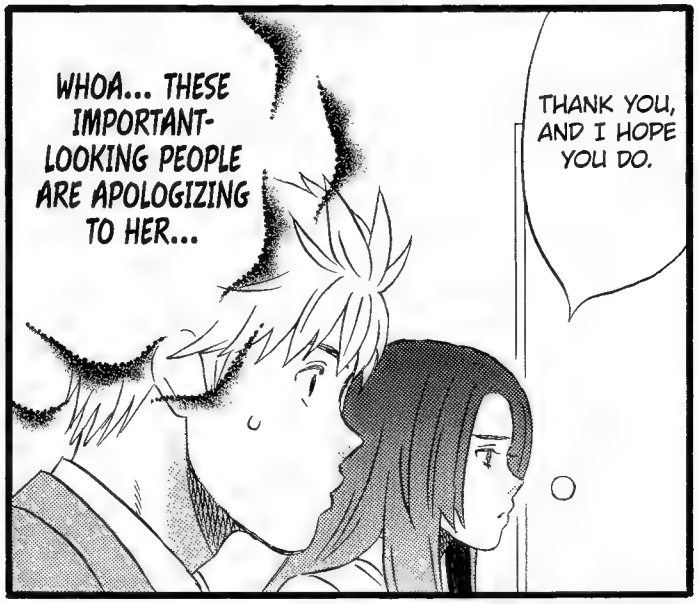

WHOA... I FEEL LIKE THAT'S A LOT OF MONEY...
SO I INTEND TO CHARGE THEM ACCORDINGLY.

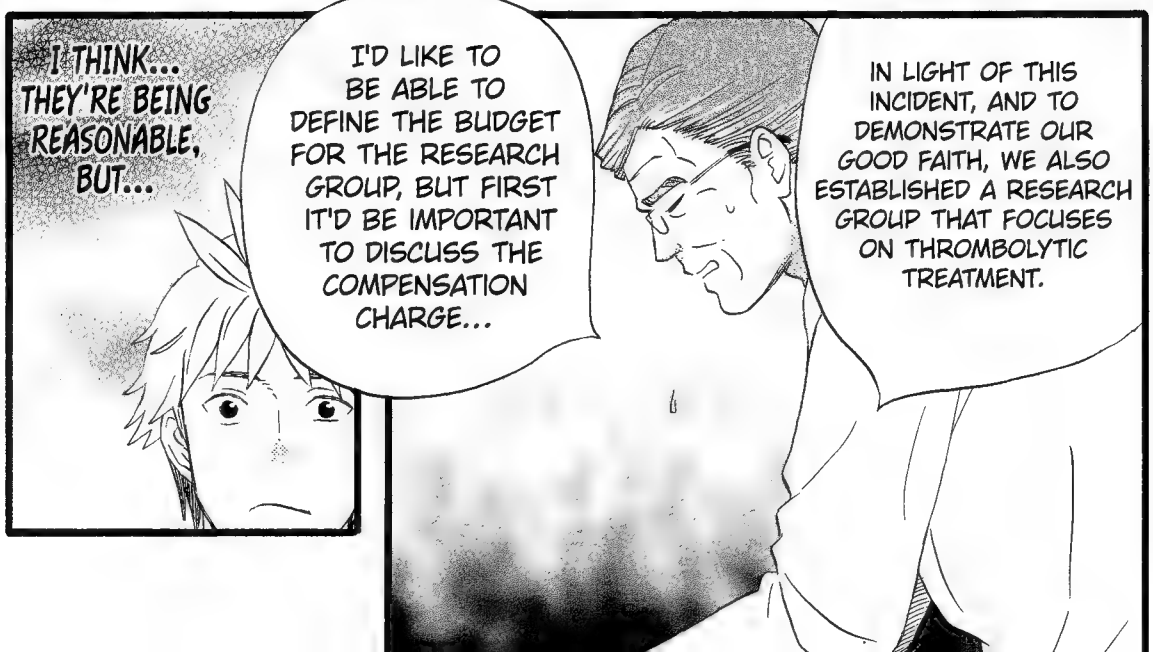

THE LIFE OF MY MOTHER IS SOMETHING IRREPLACEABLE AND PRICELESS ...
UM... HOW MUCH DOES ONE USUALLY CHARGE AS COMPENSATION FOR MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE?

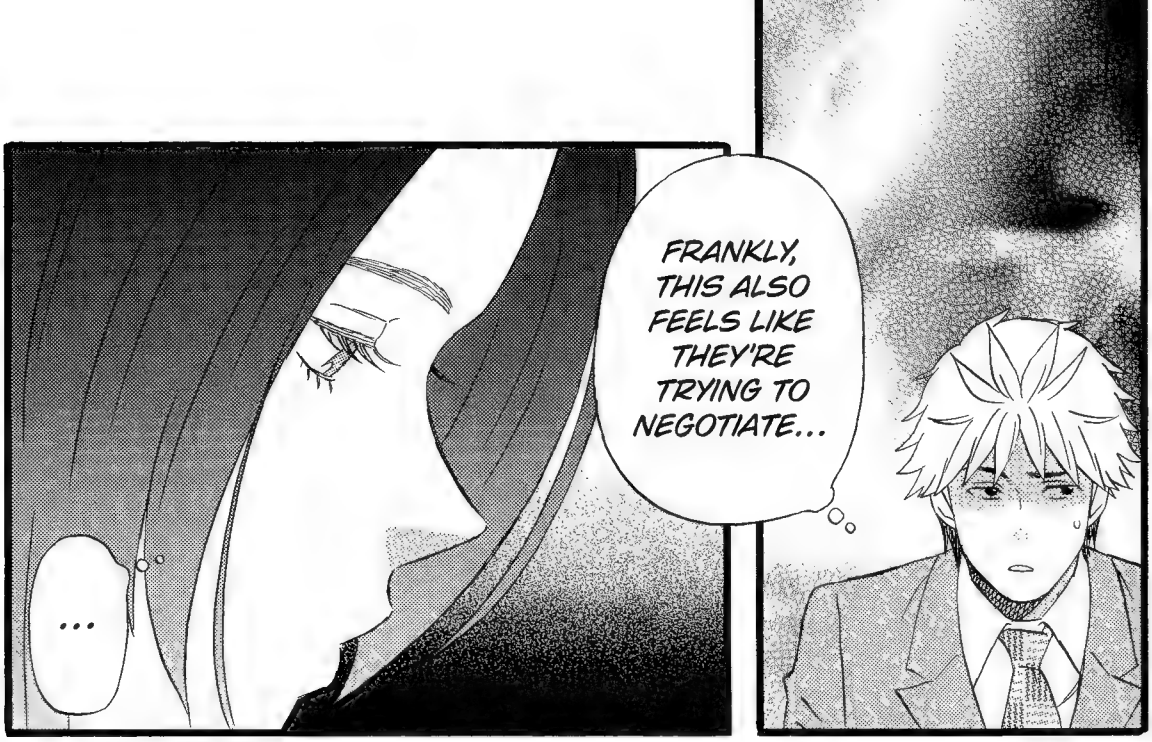
...AHEM. WE REGRETFULLY MADE A MISTAKE, FOR WHICH WE PROFUSELY APOLOGIZE.

WE WILL DO OUR VERY BEST TO PREVENT THIS SORT OF ACCIDENT FROM HAPPENING IN THE FUTURE.
TRULY, YOU HAVE OUR DEEPEST APOLOGIES.

AS SUCH...
I COULD BE MISTAKEN, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THE PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH ISHIMURA-SAN WERE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT...


WHOA... THESE IMPORTANT-LOOKING PEOPLE ARE APOLOGIZING TO HER...
THANK YOU, AND I HOPE YOU DO.


I THINK... THEY'RE BEING REASONABLE, BUT...
I'D LIKE TO BE ABLE TO DEFINE THE BUDGET FOR THE RESEARCH GROUP, BUT FIRST IT'D BE IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS THE COMPENSATION CHARGE...
IN LIGHT OF THIS INCIDENT, AND TO DEMONSTRATE OUR GOOD FAITH, WE ALSO ESTABLISHED A RESEARCH GROUP THAT FOCUSES ON THROMBOLYTIC TREATMENT.

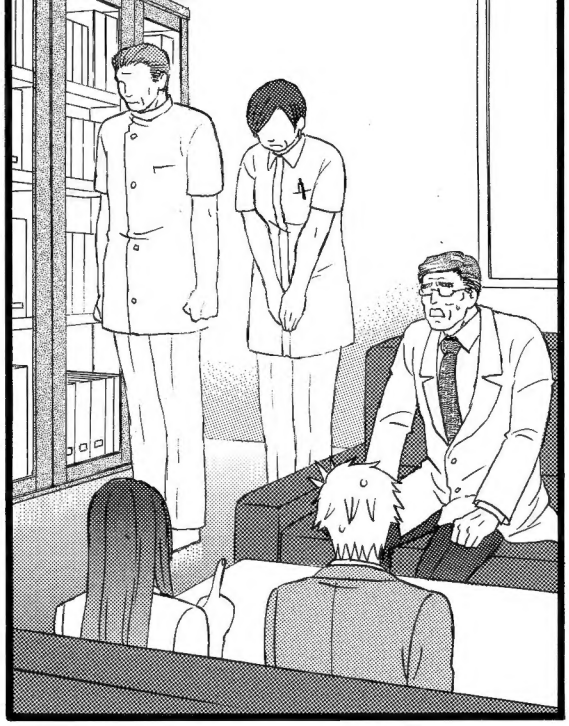

...
FRANKLY, THIS ALSO FEELS LIKE THEY'RE TRYING TO NEGOTIATE...

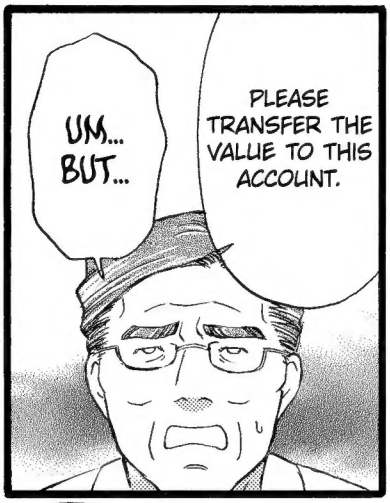
THAT'S RIGHT! THE PRICE OF MY WIFE'S MOTHER'S LIFE IS INVALUABLE!
IT CANNOT BE NEGOTIATED!
I REFUSE TO MAKE ANY CONCESSIONS ON THIS AMOUNT.
I'M SORRY, BUT I HAVE ALREADY DECIDED ON THE COMPENSATION CHARGE.

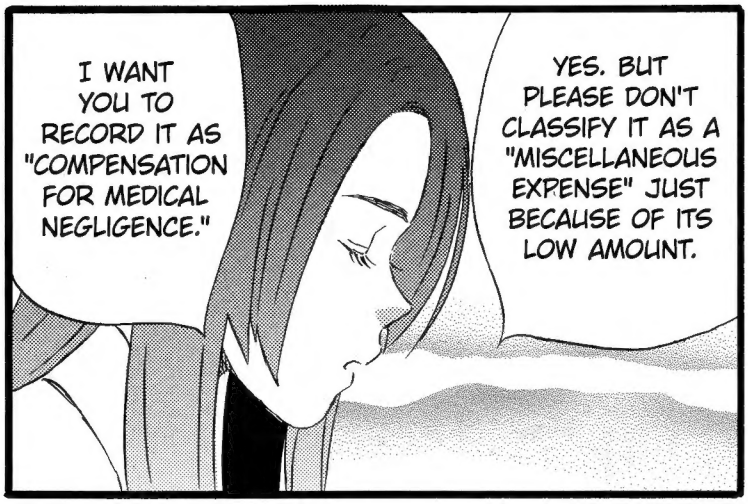
RAISE...
AS COMPENSATION...
HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT...?
...!

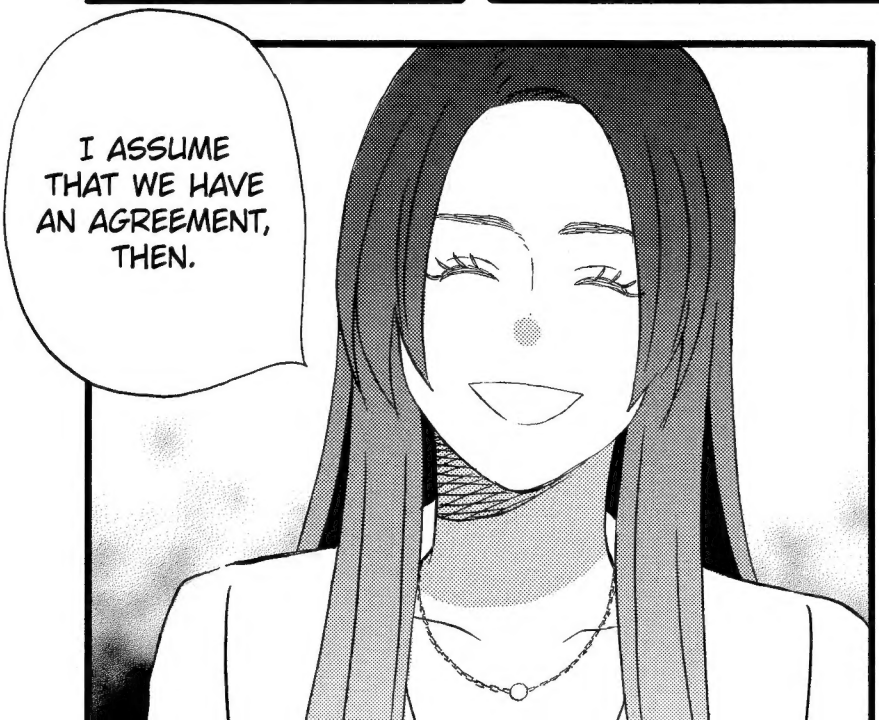
I WANT ONE YEN!

ONE YEN?
...EXCUSE ME?
ONE YEN.



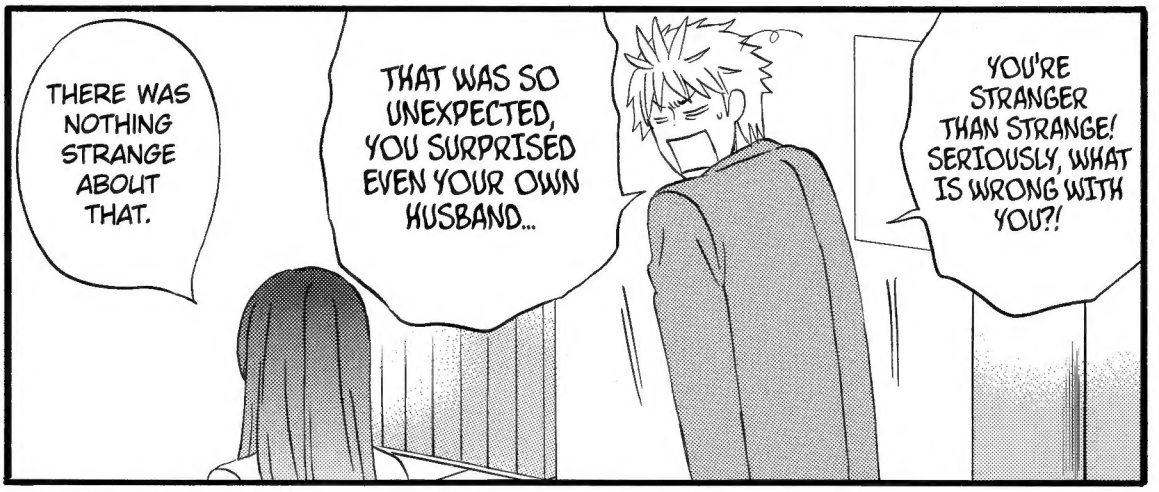

UM... BUT...
PLEASE TRANSFER THE VALUE TO THIS ACCOUNT.

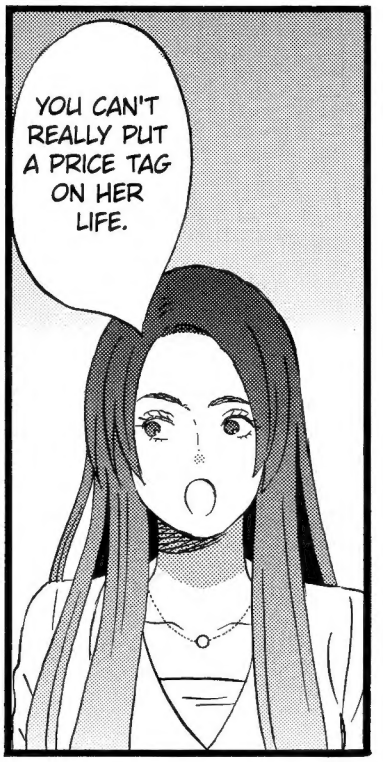

I WANT YOU TO RECORD IT AS "COMPENSATION FOR MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE."
YES. BUT PLEASE DON'T CLASSIFY IT AS A "MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE" JUST BECAUSE OF ITS LOW AMOUNT.


I ASSUME THAT WE HAVE AN AGREEMENT, THEN.

N-NO, NOT AT ALL! IT IS FINE...
DO YOU DISAGREE WITH THE AMOUNT?
However...

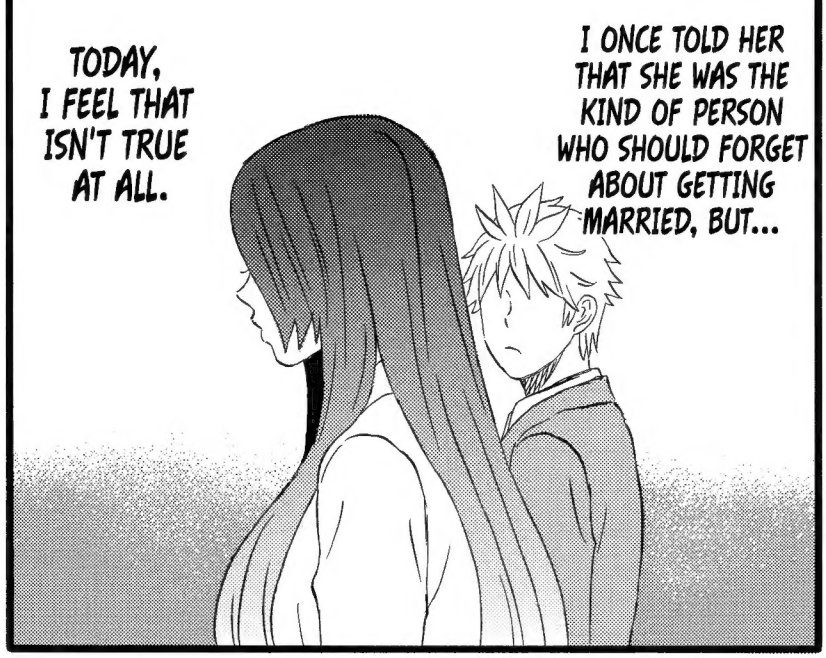
I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE A STRANGE PERSON, BUT...

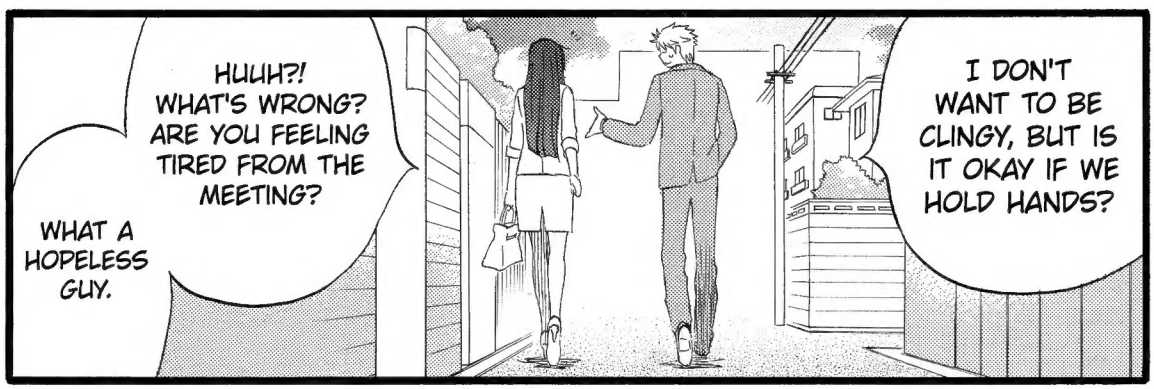

THERE WAS NOTHING STRANGE ABOUT THAT.
THAT WAS SO UNEXPECTED, YOU SURPRISED EVEN YOUR OWN HUSBAND...
YOU'RE STRANGER THAN STRANGE! SERIOUSLY, WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?!

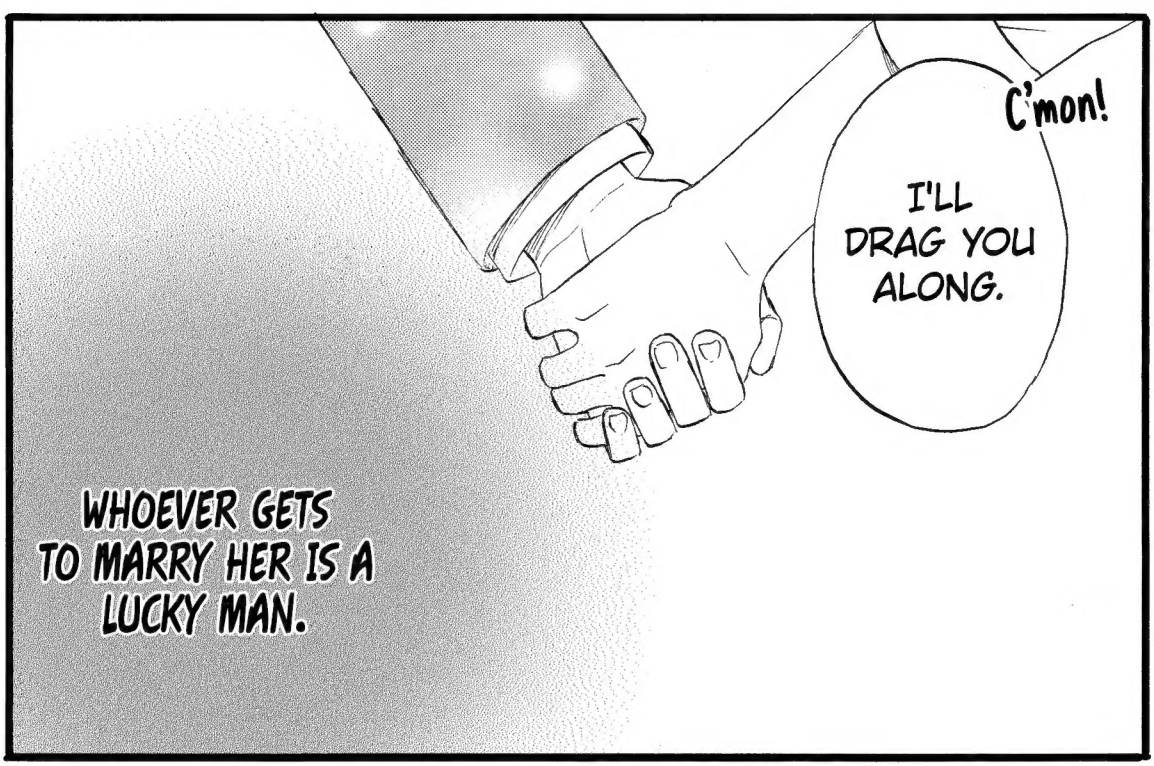

YOU CAN'T REALLY PUT A PRICE TAG ON HER LIFE.

I ABSOLUTELY DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE THEM ANY ROOM TO BARGAIN.
THAT'S WHY I ASKED FOR ONE YEN.
SHE'S INCREDIBLY AFFECTIONATE.
STILL, HOW SHOULD I PUT IT? ISHIMURA-SAN MAY LOOK COLD AT FIRST GLANCE, BUT...
I-I SEE... IT DOES MAKE SENSE WHEN YOU EXPLAIN IT...

Huh?!
WHAT'S UP? IS THERE SOMETHING ON MY FACE?
NO. UM...
?


TODAY, I FEEL THAT ISN'T TRUE AT ALL.
I ONCE TOLD HER THAT SHE WAS THE KIND OF PERSON WHO SHOULD FORGET ABOUT GETTING MARRIED, BUT...


HUUH?! WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU FEELING TIRED FROM THE MEETING?
WHAT A HOPELESS GUY.
I DON'T WANT TO BE CLINGY, BUT IS IT OKAY IF WE HOLD HANDS?


C'mon!
I'LL DRAG YOU ALONG.
WHOEVER GETS TO MARRY HER IS A LUCKY MAN.